

MOTHER JAILS SELF AND TWO DAUGHTERS IN LIVING TOMB FOR TWO YEARS

Brooklyn, May 31.—Florence and Frances Weeks, girl victims of Brooklyn's "living tomb" apartment, will recover their minds and health, according to word just given out at the hospital where they have been cared for since they were rescued from a room in which, it is claimed, they were imprisoned two years.

Agents of the Children's society say that when they broke into the second floor apartment of a brown stone house on Stuyvesant avenue they unearthed a tale of ghastly misery more weird than the wildest fiction in the American Nights.

For two solid years Frances Weeks, 21, and Florence, 20, had sat motionless on hard chairs in a pitch-black room, while their 70-year-old mother, Mrs. Emma Hall, tramped ceaselessly up and down, never going out, never sleeping, never letting a ray of sunlight into the room, according to the authorities.

Life hummed all around them, outside.

Neighbors passed up and down the hallway of the mystery apartment.

These neighbors noticed that the door of Mr. Hall's apartment was roped and bolted, and never opened. Sometimes they heard strange, plaintive cries from within. But no body ever came out.

FANCY!

Wife—You know that check for \$500 you gave me this morning? I had a dreadfully narrow escape with it.

Husband—How so?

Wife—Why, just as I was about depositing it I found out it was needed to make my bank account good—so I got it cashed at the butcher's. Fancy my depositing it and then not having anything in the bank!—Judge.

Twice a week a strange, little, old man would come to the door, whisper through the crack beneath it, and leave packages of food.

Finally the neighbors reported this queer story to the authorities. Children's society agents broke into the apartment after an hour's parley through the keyhole with its mysterious occupants.

"Don't let the light touch me!" the old woman shrieked when the agents finally entered. "Don't let the air touch me! I will die! Don't touch anything! Don't change anything!"

The woman was clad in many dresses, one over the other, and wore three night caps with a sunbonnet over them.

Her two daughters, neatly dressed, but with matted and unkempt hair, sat motionless before a table on which was their food, raw meat, raw whites of eggs and some cheap pound cake.

The girls watched the agents with great black eyes, but were too weak to speak or move.

From Mrs. Hall the story was finally obtained. Authorities say she told them her first husband, father of the girls, died when he was 42. Gradually she had come to believe that if the sunlight touched her she, too, would die.

She seemed to gain a weird, hypnotic control over her daughters, and shut them up with herself in the sunless prison where they have just been found.

All the shades were pulled down, papers pasted over them, the doors sealed, and paper and wax stuffed in all the keyholes.

Mrs. Hall said, according to the agents, she had not slept for two years and that her daughters had sat all that time on the two straight-backed chairs, their hands folded except when they ate, even sleeping in that posture.